



## **BOMBER COMMAND COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY SUNDAY, 3 JUNE 2012**

**WHAT:** Commemorative ceremony for the air and ground crew who served in Bomber Command during World War II. Ceremonies will be held in all capital cities in Australia, London, Canada and New Zealand on the same day and at the same (local) time. The debt we owe those who served in Bomber Command is beyond measure. Their sacrifices and inspiration must never be forgotten nor dimmed by time.

**WHEN:** Sunday, 3 June 2012 at 11am

**WHERE:** Memorial Garden at the front gates of RAAF Amberley. This location provides an unique opportunity to link our air and ground crew of the bomber force of World War II with those serving in the present Air Force. It also facilitates participation of the Australian Air Force Cadets our airmen of the future

**WHO:** All who wish to commemorate those who served in Bomber Command. This annual ceremony is an opportunity for all to honour, pay tribute and recognise the sacrifice and service of air and ground crew who served with pride and distinction in Bomber Command. We collectively can remember with pride and gratitude those who have died in service and those who have served and are no longer with us.

**WHY:** In September 1940, Winston Churchill said, "*the fighters are our salvation but the bombers alone provide the means of victory*". Between Dunkirk in 1940 and D-Day in 1944, Bomber Command, later supported by the American 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, provided the only strategic attack against the German Forces on the western front. They were the spearhead in defeating the enemy both by destroying the German's war materials manufacturing capacity and forcing the Axis powers to divert significant resources in men and armament to defend their cities. Their devotion to duty laid the foundation for D-Day and preserved for us the liberal democratic society which we enjoy today. Bomber Command embraced an air crew of about 125,000 men from most parts of the British Empire, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Ten thousand were Australian.

**In all, 55,000—nearly half—were lost. Australia lost 3,486 airmen killed in action and 546 killed in training.** Twenty-four Victoria Crosses were awarded to Bomber Command personnel. Our Air Force does not have a series of geographical sites similar to the Army's Gallipoli, The Somme, Tobruk and Kokoda. Nor does it have the resting places of ships such as HMAS Sydney and AHS Centaur where Australians can visit and observe remembrance of the gallant deeds of those two proud services. Therefore, this ceremony provides an opportunity for Australians to gather and ensure that our airmen and airwomen of Bomber Command are not forgotten

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Mr. Vic Henderson, who served in 150 RAF Squadron in Bomber Command and subsequently with 1,2,6 and 38 RAF Squadrons will give the Reflections address on behalf of Aircrew. The name of the person to give the address on behalf of Ground Crew to be advised

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT:** The Organising Committee wishes to acknowledge the support from RAAF Amberley, The Department of Defence and the voluntary participation of the Amberley Brass and the Blackstone-Ipswich Cambrian Choir.

**Further information:**

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